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Memorandum

To: ENRP Co-Chairs Sean O'Connor & Barry Weinstein, MD

From: Transportation Subcommittee Chair Hal Morse

Re: October & November 2003 meetings

Date: December 5, 2003

The Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership's Transportation Subcommittee met October 17, 2003 and November 7, 2003 at Christino's at the Amherst Marriott. Present for the October meeting were subcommittee members Morse, Ferraro, Lehman, Meckler (proxy), and Wendel, as well as Robert Gower from the NFTA, Doug Stuckel from GBNRTC, and David Colligan from the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy. Present for the November meeting were subcommittee members Morse, Lehman, Meckler (proxy), and Wendel, as well as Robert Gower from the NFTA, and Jody Clark of the Seneca Nation of Indians.

Job Access & Public Transportation

Following approval from the ENRP general body of the pilot sites – the Casino-NFIA airport-Vantage Park-Summit Park Mall corridor in Niagara County, and the BNIA airport-Walden Avenue corridor in Erie County – the modeling of the sites and the development of the process has begun (please see attached). For the pilot, technical data once again backs up our pilot choices, so we are now inventorying existing transit services. We will then develop service concepts; adjustments to current service or creation of new service. On the long-term goal, a draft formal coordination process has been proposed. Initial feedback included adding the BNE and all IDAs to the form, and making the coordination process concurrent to the IDA approval process. Both the pilot and long-term goal will continue to be developed.

Shoreline Corridor MOU

Recognizing that a multi-use shoreline trail could be created from Old Fort Niagara all the way through Erie County and beyond to the Pennsylvania state line, the GBNRTC is securing signatures to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would promote coordinated signage, maintenance, and investment in the trail (see attached). Each

municipality would retain ownership of and responsibility for their portion of the trail, but by uniting the possibility of attracting new grants and the overall user experience will be augmented.

It was suggested that ENRP endorse the MOU, and in fact become a signatory to the document. **The ENRP Transportation Subcommittee recommends that the Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership endorse and become a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding Among Shoreline Trail Jurisdictions and Agencies.**

Waterfront Linear Park

Following referral to the Transportation Subcommittee at the September general meeting, David Colligan of the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy spoke with the group about the proposed waterfront linear park from the Niagara Gorge through to southern Erie County. Colligan noted that there have been several segmented plans for parts of the system, but there is an opportunity to coordinate these projects, especially in the context of the power relicensing's cultural, recreational, and land use aspects.

To that end, the Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy prepared a grant application to the National Parks Service to secure money to hire a facilitator to bring together the many players in an effort to discuss coordination of efforts. Various federal, state, and local officials have supported this application, and ENRP is now being asked to lend its support as well.

In the long-term, if it is decided that the plan should be pursued, it will need a group to step forward to take the lead. Some suggestions for this were ENRP, the Framework for Regional Growth, or the GBNRTC. This, however, is a separate issue and not under consideration at this time.

One caveat was made for supporting the project – it must represent and include east-west trails and plans such as the Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor Management Plan. The corridor should be visually represented on the maps, as well as being considered at the eventual meetings on the proposal.

The ENRP Transportation Subcommittee recommends that the Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership generate a letter of support (see attached) for the facilitation of discussion on a proposed Waterfront Linear Park, under the condition that the Western Erie Canal Heritage Corridor Management Plan is represented. (Note: Subcommittee member Samuel Ferraro abstained on this recommendation.)

Grand Island Bridges / Bypass

At the September general meeting, ENRP received a copy of an approved Niagara County resolution entitled, "Niagara County Requests Analysis of the Future of the Grand Island Bridges and/or Grand Island Bypass Alternatives." The resolution requested ENRP to "provide an analysis on how to best resolve the Grand Island bridge issue for the benefit

of Grand Island residents, area commuters and commercial traffic flow,”. The matter was referred to the Transportation Subcommittee.

The subcommittee examined the issue, and determined that this analysis should be done. It was further determined that the matter is best pursued through the GBNRTC, the region’s Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), with full participation by ENRP. GBNRTC staff agreed to include the scope in the proposal for the upcoming Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), for consideration by their board.

The ENRP Transportation Subcommittee recommends that the Erie-Niagara Regional Partnership participate in and support an analysis of the future of the Grand Island bridges and/or Grand Island bypass alternatives, with studies to be conducted by the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council.

Other Topics

Other topics discussed included bike trail signs, Route 531, proposed international bridge alternatives, possible new cargo service at the Niagara Falls International Airport, Route 63, and Buffalo-Niagara Falls tourist transportation (please see the Tourism & Culture Subcommittee report).